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## Native Seed Scoop [July 2020]

University of Northern Iowa. Tallgrass Prairie Center.

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# NATIVE SEED SCOOP



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## Iowa Scoop

### *NRCS Native Prairie Seed Calculator Update*

Alan Lange, Iowa NRCS Resource Conservationist, presented a webinar on updates to the NRCS Native Prairie Seeding Calculator May 13, 2020.

The goal of the NRCS calculator and Seeding Plan Supplement is to enable direct communication between planners and seed dealers so project objectives are met, appropriate seed mixes are planted, and accurate records are filed.

Ensure you are using the most up-to-date version of the calculator by downloading it at:

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/ia/technical/ecoscience/bio/>

Seed dealers should expect to receive Seeding Plan Supplements from NRCS Conservation Planners. Completion of the supplement has been mandatory since June 2019. Phone and email contact information for the NRCS Field Office staff is listed at the bottom of the form. Responsibility for meeting practice specifications remains with the client.

## Updates:

1. Streamlined check sheets – There is now one check sheet that covers all Conservation Cover (327) practices; CP-43 Prairie Strips and CP-42 Pollinator requirements are incorporated.
2. Refers planners to guidelines in Technical Note #28 for clarification on whether local ecotype is required; NRCS field office staff will receive additional training on this.
3. Removed species-specific cost estimates due to frequent price fluctuations; per acre cost estimates can still be added.
4. Some client and site information that is repeated on different sheets auto-populates to make completing the forms more efficient and user-friendly.

Note: The Tallgrass Prairie Center offers an online [Tallgrass Prairie Seed Calculator](#) that could provide comparisons and is freely accessible for any public or private use.

## ***2020 Native Seed Stakeholder Meeting***



View a [video of the introductions and panel discussion](#) on “Challenges and Opportunities in the Native Seed Market.” A report on the meeting will be available at <https://tallgrassprairiecenter.org/native-seed-stakeholders> this summer.

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# National Scoop

## *[“An Assessment of Native Seed Needs and Capacities”](#)*

The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine have formed a committee to work on Goal 1 of the National Seed Strategy: “Identify seed needs, and ensure the reliable availability of genetically appropriate seed.”

They are analyzing the native seed supply chain across the country. So far they have described factors leading to instability in the market. In the next phase of their work, they will look for input from organizations that utilize native seed for restoration. They will not directly write national policy, but their work may influence future policy decisions.

For more information, view the webinar “Assessing the Nation’s Native Seed Supply,” recorded April 28, 2020 as part of the [Natural Areas Association Webinar Series.](#)

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## Events

If you have a friend, family member, or new employee who desires an introduction to plant identification, encourage them to visit [Botany Beginners](#). The Tallgrass Prairie Center, in partnership with Practical Farmers of Iowa, offered this free course to teach native plant identification in the tallgrass prairie region, including a few common weeds and woodland species. The live webinar series is over, but recordings are available on the [Botany Resources](#) page. There will be four live virtual field tours in late July 2020.

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## In other news...

- A *Successful Farming* article describes several reasons for widespread Dicamba damage in non-resistant Iowa soybeans this year: [Dicamba 2020: What went wrong in Iowa?](#) Is this also affecting prairie remnants, native plantings, or seed production fields?
- An Indiana native seed grower has built a milkweed gin to condition the seed while also processing the fluff for use in pillows or insulated jackets.

Could this influence consumer demand for milkweed: [Muncie nursery rebuilds milkweed gin to help butterflies](#)

- Summary of ISU study on monarch preferences for egg-laying, larval success: [Tellus | USDA-ARS](#)
- Native flowering plants provide important late-season food resources for honeybees: [A little prairie can rescue honey bees from famine on the farm](#)
- The word is getting out about CP-43! Successful Farming published a recent article on STRIPS: [The power of prairie](#)
- Missouri's [Grow Native!](#) program promotes the use of native plants in both urban and rural contexts (later section of the article): [Threatened American Prairies: Crucial for Their Biodiversity, Native Grasslands Need a Hand](#)



*A greenhouse-grown plug of smooth blue aster being transplanted into a new seed production plot. Over the next few years, seed harvested from this plot over will refresh our foundation seed supply for this central Iowa ecotype.*

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